

## **Faith Formation – Week Nine**

### **The Doctrine of the Last Things**

#### **“End Times” Events**

The Bible describes many events which correspond to the end times. There is much diversity among Bible believing Christians regarding the meaning and timing of these events. Among these are The Tribulation, The Rapture, The Restoration of Israel, and The Millennium. For the purposes of this study, we will focus only on the more clear aspects of this doctrine: The Second Coming of Christ, Death, Judgment, and Eternity.

#### **The Return of Christ**

- A central teaching of Scripture is that Jesus Christ will physically return to Earth to judge the living and the dead: Acts 1:9-11; Matt. 24:29-30; 1 Cor. 15:22-23; 2 Tim 4:1; Rev. 19:11-16
  
- This return is imminent, meaning that no one knows when it will happen and that it could happen at any time: Matt. 24:27; 42-44; 1 Thess. 5:1-4
  
- The expectation of Christ’s return should motivate us all to holy living: Titus 2:11-14; 2 Pet. 3:10-12

#### **Death and Judgment**

- The Bible teaches that all people will experience physical death and judgment: Heb. 9:27
  
- Since the soul lives on, “death” refers to the separation of the physical body from the soul: Matt. 10:28
  
- Every person will someday rise from the dead and be judged. However, believers will rise and be judged at a different time and in a different manner than non-believers.

#### **The Destiny of Believers**

##### *Upon Physical Death*

- Believers upon death go to be *with the Lord*: 2 Cor. 5:8
  
- This place is referred to as *Abraham’s Bosom* or *Paradise*, where believers await bodily resurrection: Luke 16:19-22; 23:43

### ***Resurrection***

- Scripture teaches that when Christ appears he will gather to himself all people who are His. This is commonly referred to as *The Rapture*: Matt. 24:30-31
- First, all saints who have died will be resurrected; then all the elect who are still living will follow and join Christ in the clouds: 1 Cor. 15:20-23; 51-52; 1 Thess. 4:16-17

### ***Judgment***

- All believers will appear before the *Judgment Seat of Christ*, which is a translation of the Greek word *Bema*, by which this judgment is commonly referred. The purpose of the *Bema Seat Judgment* is primarily for eternal rewards, and not at all for salvation: 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:9-11; Rom. 14:10-13

### ***Eternity***

- Believers will spend eternity with God in the *New Heaven* and the *New Earth*: Rev. 21:1-4; 22-23

## **The Destiny of Non-Believers**

### ***Upon Physical Death***

- Unbelievers upon death go to a place of torment called *Hades*, where they await resurrection: Luke 16:23-25

### ***Resurrection and Judgment***

- Non-believers will be resurrected at the Great *White Throne Judgment* where they all will be condemned: Rev. 20:11-14

### ***Eternity***

- The eternal state of non-believers is that they will be cast into the *Lake of Fire*: Rev. 20:15

## **Application:**

- As believers, we should live in expectancy of the return of Christ.
- How we live our lives as believers really does matter! We will be rewarded for our faithfulness: 2 Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4
- Eternal suffering for non-believers is real! This should motivate us to compassion for the lost.